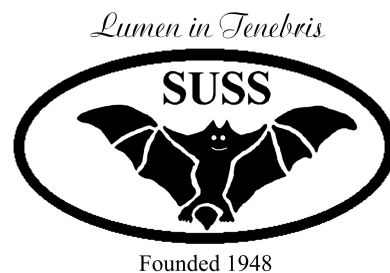


SUSS BULL 48 (2)

JULY — SEPTEMBER 2008



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Bulletin of the Sydney University Speleological Society



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Cover Photo: Lynds Cave, Tasmania
Photo Paul Lewis

EDITORIAL

Your Bull has a new Editor. I'll be taking over from Phil Maynard who has been editing the SUSS Bull since Issue 42(1), April 2002. The Committee and the new Editor wishes to thank Phil for the high quality of the Bull over the last few years. Phil has been an excellent editor, transforming the text of cavers into readable english, and using his expertise in image processing to ensure the best possible choice and reproduction in the pictures.

A great Bull needs articles and pictures. Thanks to Rowena Larkins and Jill Rowling for articles and photos in this Bull and to Paul Lewis for the cover shot. Also to Alan Pryke for the map and overlay showing the progress that SUSS members have made in exploring and extending Grants Cave. I hope to see some articles from newer members for the next issue. You don't have to be a trip leader to write the trip report. (I can hear some saying we don't have trip leaders ... yeah I know, we have trip coordinators and trip supervisors but I'm from the old school.)

Regards,

Mike Lake
Editor

NEWS AND GOSSIP

SpeleoSports 2009?

SUSS is planning to host a SpeleoSports in early 2009. We will be looking for obstacle designs and materials, competitors and organisers so contact the Committee today if you would like to participate.

SUSS Website Photo Gallery

SUSS is planning a revamp of our website photo gallery so if you have any submissions email them to a Committee member with your name (for crediting) and appropriate captions (names, dates, locations etc).

Maps and Bulls on DVD

The entire SUSS cave map library on DVD is still available for purchase. There are field sketches, ink maps produced on drafting film, ink maps produced on linen, as well as some of the latest digitally-produced cave projects. The DVD also contains all SUSS Bulls in HTML format from 35(1), July 1995 to 47(4), March 2008 and SUSS Bulls as PDF format from 42(1), April 2002 to 47(4).

Timor Book

"Timor Caves – Hunter Valley, New South Wales" produced by the Newcastle and Hunter Valley Speleological Society (NHVSS) has been released and is a superb publication. The quality of the content, photos and layout is excellent. Go to <http://nhvss.org.au/> for information on how to obtain a copy.

A MAMMOTH ATE MY SHOES

BY ROWENA LARKINS – JENOLAN, 12 JUNE 2008

Participants: Rowena Larkins, Mel Stamell, Kevin Wong, Kandy Wang, Oscar Cai



Group in Snakes Gut. Photo Rowena Larkins

The group had done some caving before with SUSS at previous trips. At the entrance to Mammoth Rowena gave Kevin, Kandy and Oscar the usual talk about minimal impact caving and then we were off. The party followed the usual path through entrance chamber, some chose the climb down the jug handle while others went the squeeze, past the 40 ft and sand passage and into Horseshoe chamber. We paused here a bit and checked out the aven, showing the new members just how high this chamber could be. We made sure that we trod carefully to avoid anything growing in this chamber. On the floor we spotted an albino worm squirming amongst the debris which had been washed in. We headed into railway tunnel and paused a few moments to see the skull and crossbones and the signatures from the early adventurers. Then it was down the slope and across the sugar cubes. We crossed these carefully, observing the deep drops on each side and the passage way below.

We climbed down the rockpile and headed right into the rifts which led through the snake's guts. Part way along the solution tube we paused at the "hole to water" and consumed some energy (sugary chocolate bars and the like), while some of the more enthusiastic people from the group headed down the hole to see the water. The unimpressive pool of dirty water surrounded by thick gooey mud did little to inspire all to check it out.

At the T intersection where Ice Pick lake was to the right, and Naked Lady to the left we paused again for some food. We saw a small crawling insect in the mud. It was about 5 mm long, albino, with about 8 legs and feelers out the front. We watched it crawl for a few minutes then leaving our bags, headed to Ice Pick lake.

As we progressed a voice cried out about his shoes.

Rowena checked out the climb down to Ice Pick lake and decided that a tape was needed for this trip. She made use of Mel's 20 meter 1 inch tape, tying it off at the top of a well decorated, but muddy (heavily trogged), flowstone climb. She headed down to the mud bank below and gave assistance to the rest of the group as needed as they climbed down the tape. Just across the mud floor was Ice Pick Lake, the biggest lake in Mammoth, with a dive line heading into it. We were amazed at the clearness of the water. With our torches we could see the dive line heading off through the water. The surface was covered with calcite rafts. Across the lake we could see a sheer wall and the deep lake swept out of view to the left where the sheer mud wall, climbed in the past using ice picks was hidden from view. People suggested coming back to the lake with lilos to paddle across, and others thought of Keir's trip many years ago, where he had an, um, interesting exit out of the cave. Meanwhile we were getting a running commentary of a shoe.

From the lake we returned up the flowstone and collected our packs from the junction. We stopped on the way to see if we could see any more insect life, but they were hiding from us. The passage leading to Naked Lady was high, and involved climbing some steep passages. Rowena hung Mel's hand line to assist the group climbing up. The final entrance to Naked Lady involved an awkward chimney climb, which we all managed assisted by the tape. Here we stopped for lunch and scanned the walls and ceiling of this high chamber for signs of the Naked Ladies, but guessed that a naked young man returning from Ice Pick lake many years ago must have scared them away. The shoe commentary had now switch to the other foot, as someone was having problems with his left shoe. From Naked Lacy chamber we headed up the flowstone to the right of the chamber, making sure we kept to the trail and avoiding the decorated flowstone to the side, through some rifty passages and down the Hell Hole. After a slosh through the mud pools to get back to Railway tunnel we continued to it's end. Our intrepid new members, inspired by the knowledge that there was probably more passage past the rockpile that was awaiting discovery, headed up and in.

Waiting below, Rowena could follow their progress and see the occasional glimmer of light from their headlamps. After about 45 minutes she called them back saying she was keen to get back to the cabin before it got too cold. There were rumours that the temp got down to minus 7 on Friday night. The return trip through Railway tunnel involved more sloshing through mud and comments about shoes. When we entered the daylight outside the cave we were amused to see the condition of the shoes. These joggers had started off looking worn but serviceable, and at the end of the cave were totally worn out. They held together all the way to the hut, but I suspect that these shoes were never worn again.



Kandy going to Ice Pick Lake. Photo Rowena Larkins

ADVERT

Jenolan Caves Sycamore Control – 8th & 9th November 2008

Lithgow Oberon Landcare Association with Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust & National Parks & Wildlife Service invites you to Come & Weed-bust on the Sycamores!!

Bunk-bed self-contained accommodation, cooking & kitchen facilities in 'The Gatehouse'. Accommodation at the Caves provided courtesy of Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust.

BBQ dinner, tour of precinct grounds and nocturnal spotlighting provided by the local Landcare Association, plus main meals supplied.

All tools, herbicides and PPE will be provided for the workday sessions. We will have contract bush regeneration staff to assist with required training, and Sycamore control techniques.

What you'll Need

Linen, doona (or a sleeping bag), towel, toiletries, drinks and snacks (shared kitchen cooking facilities available). There is an ATM, restaurant, snack-bar, and souvenir shop.

Appropriate work clothes as well as warm / wet weather / spare clothes. Long-sleeved shirt, long pants, suitable shoes/boots, sunscreen, hat, water-bottle. Binoculars and a good torch if you have them. A fair-average degree of fitness would help, as the terrain is uneven and steep.

To register contact: Trish Kidd

Phone: Mob 0423 527 740 or 4780 5623 (Fridays only)

Email: tkidd@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

HEY, THIS PIT DOES HAVE A BOTTOM

BY ROWENA LARKINS – JENOLAN, 13 JUNE 2008

Participants: Michael Collins, Max Midlen, Rowena Larkins, Louise Johnston

Some people had new gear, some wanted practise at rigging, others just wanted to go zipping down a deep dark hole. We drove down to carpark 3 behind Caves house. Grabbed our gear and headed up the valley along the old Lucas Rocks trail. We knew Bottomless Pit was on the west side of the river bed, and up from a Y junction, but were a bit unsure about which Y junction. Rowena and Max trawled around the bush up from the first Y junction and decided the cave was further up stream. At the second junction we surface hunted again and Max shouted out that he had found it.

At the cave entrance we rigged the top anchor and Michael trogged up and prepared to rig the inside of the cave. A redirection from a jug handle about 3 meters into the entrance was used. Action Man Michael, with a variety of tapes and crabs hanging from his chest and waist harness, headed into the cave to do the rigging. The rest of us tied off to a safety line at the entrance and watched Michael it, until he disappeared from view.

After a while he called out that he had rigged the first rebelay at the first ledge called “Eagles Beak” (about a quarter of the way down) and crossed over and Max started down. We could hear the guys talking down below, but the echo’s from the deep pit made it impossible to understand what was being said. After a while Louise was called down. Rowena hung around on the surface for a bit longer and then she was called down. It was a slow descent as much of the fun was looking at the streams of formation that were flowing down the 60 meter long walls.

The abseil itself was about 50 meters, with a scramble and crawl at the bottom of the pit making up the extra 10 meters. Half way down was “Twin Shaft Saddle”. The rope went down the front of this and another rebelay point had been set up below. We poked around, keeping well clear of the taped off area where there were bones, and examined the signatures on the wall left by the early explorers.. It is amazing to think that people got down and out of here back in the 1870s.

We started back out, with Michael doing the de-rigging. The pitch was on a slight angle which made ascending it hard work. We had one foot in the foot loop of the lead ascender and the other fending off from the wall, being careful to avoid any decoration. We started rigging at about 11:30 am and were all out by 3:00 pm.



*Michael Collins & Louise Johnston doing Bottomless Pit.
Photos Rowena Larkins*

CAVE SEARCH AND RESCUE REPORT: WOMBEYAN, MAY 2008

BY JILL ROWLING AND MIKE LAKE – WOMBEYAN CAVES, 17 & 18 MAY 2008

Participants: Jill Rowling, Mike Lake, Phil Maynard, Alan & Megan Pryke

Friday Night – Saturday Morning

Mike and Jill had taken the Friday off work on leave, so that we could have a leisure day before the SUSS trip. This was mainly shopping and dining. We then drove to Wombeyan and selected a spot in the far corner of the camping ground; according to Mike, this was at 9:10 pm. There were a lot of campers this weekend but the ‘cavers corner’ had no one except for a small white car parked there with tent behind. Thinking it might be ‘one of the SUSS contingent’ we did not disturb whomever it was and set up our tent near the fallen tree. As it was cold, we sat in our car reading our books. Mike eventually turned in. Shortly afterwards, Alan and Megan arrived. They thought the tent behind the white car might be Geoff MacDonnell’s. We all went to bed. Jill didn’t hear Phil arrive. The next morning we all discussed around breakfast about the tent. Phil said he’d not been contacted by Geoff but had heard third hand that Geoff had been interested in the trip. Megan called near the tent but there was no answer. Eventually someone looked in and found it had no-one in it. The car was a hire car. A tattered trog suit in the tent suggested that Geoff had gone off somewhere but we could not access the car boot to see if there was any helmet or light. If these items were in the boot, then Geoff was most likely not in a cave. People speculated all sorts of things: had Geoff got lost, or sick? Had he had one of his spells? Had he wandered out in the bush somewhere? Had a tourist found him ill and sent him off to Goulburn? Phil and Jill went to the guides office anyway to let them know what were our trip plans, get tokens for the cave gate and let them know about our concerns about this car and tent. [Jill was later told, the guides called Goulburn hospital and Geoff had not been admitted, so they let the police know that there was a missing person]. As there was nothing we could do at this stage, we continued our trips to Fig Tree Cave (Phil, Mike and Jill) and, later, Grants Cave (Alan and Megan).

Saturday 17th – Fig Tree Cave

Mike, Jill and Phil were surveying in Fig Tree Cave, intending to return that night to complete an area near the Bat End. See Wombeyan trip report dated 17th August 2008 for details.

Saturday 17th – Evening Surface Activities

Upon exiting the cave, we stopped at the Kiosk and let the guides know that we’d left a red tape handline near the Bat End for a return trip tonight, when the bats would have departed. We enquired about the abandoned tent and if no-one had shown up, should we not call the Police? Corin Smith and Lawrie Dunn replied that they had indeed done just that, as the tent was still abandoned. As there was nothing to do until the Police arrived, we went back to camp and organised dinner. Although it was still fairly early (about 5:30 pm) it was getting dark and cold. Phil opted for a brisk walk down to Mares Forest Creek / Tinted Cave area for a quick look to see if Geoff was down there. The weather forecast had been ‘sheep graziers alert’ which usually translates to ‘miserable for camping’. Jill changed to something a bit warmer and we got some jaffles underway. Just as we were half way through eating them, a rain shower started. Mike wanted to move to the Barmah and Kitchen so we packed up, finished the jaffle and Jill drove over to the Barmah. Alan and Megan had returned from Grants Cave.

The Police had arrived. Mike had met them and took them to Geoff’s car and tent. Together with Mike they searched throughout the tent and around the car for the car keys. Eventually the keys were found and the boot opened. To our dismay the boot was empty – there was no caving gear inside. That could mean that he was in a cave or had just taken his helmet and light for illumination whilst walking at night. Alan took photos as we discussed the matter. At this stage the situation was changing from simply ‘missing person’ to ‘missing person, could be in cave or could be on surface’ to ‘missing person, most likely stuck in cave’. Given there were about 400-odd caves here, some the size of a Sulo bin and others you could fly a light plane through, we wondered which ones would be more likely to search. We worked out that he was unlikely to be in either Grants or Fig Tree, but we had not actually searched the lower levels of Fig Tree. Mike asked Jill to sort out the rest of dinner while he went with Phil to walk along the track from just above the cavers campsite to the junction with the tourist track on the hill near Bullio Cave. Mike and Phil used their cave lights to scour the area near the track, and called out to Geoff, but at night someone could be just a few metres away down a slope and one could easily miss seeing them.

Jill was unable to use the Barmah, as it was filled with about 70 people from Camp Quality (little kids with cancer, plus their parents and organisers). Jill set up in the kitchen instead. Jill had just got about half way through cooking another couple of jaffles when Mike came back to say he would be away with the Police for a while.

Alan and Megan came into the kitchen to set up their dinner; what to do with Mike's second jaffle? Jill was full, Mike won't eat it if it's lukewarm, so would Alan like it? Yum! Just then Mike showed up. Alan: would you like your jaffle? Mike: Yes – er – it's too cold, no thanks. Alan: Yum! Jill packed the food things away and got into caving gear again. Clearly the Fig Tree Cave survey was not going to happen tonight and we were going to have to do a search instead. Alan, Megan and Phil got some well-earned sleep.

Saturday Night – Search Activities

Jill suggested we look at CO2 pit / Jennings Cave, Wineglass Cave first, as Geoff had previously expressed interest in these. With two Police officers, two guides (John Mackenzie and Lawrie Dunn), we got into their vehicles and went up to White Bend (or so we thought, there are a couple of bends up there which are similar). We did a search but failed to locate Jennings Cave; Lawrie and John found it further up and to our relief reported no sign of entry. Meanwhile we all went to Wineglass Cave; most went down the right hand passage; Jill went down the left hand passage to the Wallaby chamber. No Geoff. Lots of arrows scratched about though. John (guide) was appalled at the damage that had been sustained to the cave by unknown individuals. We returned to camp (Mike and Jill returned via the track just in case we could see something along the way). John Wylie from SSS had been called, and would arrive from Blackheath shortly. John has excellent knowledge of the area, and knows Geoff well enough to guess where he would most likely be.

When John Wylie arrived, we discussed search options – what cave had Geoff been interested in lately? John Wylie suggested either the new cave discovered some months ago, and which had been mentioned at the previous Thursday's SSS meeting, or Bouverie Cave. The Police agreed to accompany John to check these caves out on Bullio Ridge and search back from there. Jill suggested Mike and herself would accompany the party as far as Blackberry Hole where they would search the caves near there. John set up a cracking pace up the hill from the camping ground (Jill had to sprint to follow) and presently we arrived at Blackberry Hole, where the parties split. You have to realise the moon was nearly full, but in and out of cloud, and a stiff south westerly would spring up every so often with the odd bit of sleet. Jill could just make out the edge of the Blackberry Hole doline, into which she and Mike climbed from the south end. Blackberry Hole is a doline with two significant caves in it: Gundungurra Cave and Dutchmans Cave.

Gundungurra Cave

Jill and Mike scrambled down into the doline and quickly found the entrance of Gundungurra Cave. It was smaller than Jill had remembered. Choosing the right hand branch, Jill went in as far as the last stand-up chamber before the crawlway and called out 'Geoff'. Only a bat circled the room. A beautiful tineid moth roosted low on one wall. Jill went to the left hand branch and called through the squeeze: nothing. No signs of someone having been there recently. Jill and Mike went out, and across the doline to the north side to look in Dutchmans Cave.

Dutchmans Cave

Although there were no signs of entry (mossy rocks and fearsome nettles), Jill followed Mike down anyway to the base of the big chamber. Here Mike waited while Jill descended the vertical squeeze to look around the lower chamber. There were two buckets, and plenty of evidence of digging, but no Geoff. One bat circled around. Jill extricated herself back up through the squeeze and they both exited the cave. Jill commented about some spiders web looking like sheet cellophane. They returned across the doline and exited the same way they had entered.

Guineacore Cave

Jill and Mike wandered around for about 15 minutes in the dark, looking for Guineacore Cave. Eventually Jill found it. Mike stayed at the top of the big ladder drop while Jill descended. She stayed on the trackmarked area, and called for Geoff. A skeletonised wallaby lay across part of the track. Returning to the base of the pitch, Jill tried to fill in the visitors' booklet but both the paper and pen were pretty stuffed. Jill climbed back up and out.

Back to the Village

Mike and Jill went through the bush southwards towards the Bullio track. The old 4WD track was pretty indistinct but the gully was a good marker. Jill reached the track and turned eastwards up the hill. She waved her arms towards the south hill saying 'somewhere in here is a nice cave called Bouverie'. Little did she know the significance of that at the time. Besides, it was doubtful that she would have been able to find it in the day let alone at night.

Sunday Morning (early hours)

Up to Bouverie – various people running errands

Jill and Mike were almost at the village when a panting noise behind them revealed John (guide) running down towards them. John said that they had found a water bottle inside Bouverie cave at the base of the entrance climb. (At some stage, we are not clear exactly when, Geoff's ladder was also found.) This indicated that Geoff was very likely in Bouverie Cave, probably trapped in some way.

John had two things to get: the key for the Bouverie Cave gate and Geoff's medicine. Mike offered to get Geoff's medicine while John could look for the Bouverie key at the Guides Office, Mike would meet him back there. John gave Mike the keys to the Police wagon which contained the key to Geoff's hire car. Fortunately the key was just on the front seat of the Police vehicle and easy to find, Geoff's medicine was found in his small blue pack; various bottles of pills, a blood sugar testing unit, and about four injectors that looked like thick pens. Mike got back to the Guides Office to find John with hundreds of keys scattered across the floor. There was no key labelled as a Bouverie key.

Meanwhile Jill had proceeded to Bouverie Cave on an errand. It had started to drizzle and the top of the ridge, being exposed to the wind, was quite cold. The Police needed their Police rain jacket and some water. Jill returned to camp to obtain the required things from the Police vehicle; Corin provided some water from the kiosk; John and Mike were searching for the cave key. The latter was going to take a while so Jill, John and Mike headed up the hill with their items while Corin looked for the keys.

Following John up the hill was interesting; Jill could see clearly without a light on but could not keep up with the other two energetic ones. They turned around occasionally to see if they could see the reflective patches on Jill's overalls. The hike back up the hill took a sharp left turn, and up to the ridge above the Bouverie hill. John followed a specific route rather than a direct line, to avoid thickets. Presently they all arrived at the Bouverie Cave where the bags and gear was left. The police headed back to the village, having had a brief look at the rockpile.

Back to Village

The Guides radio was a bit noisy but functional. Possibly the batteries were in a poor state due to the cold temperature. Presently more gear was required, so Jill opted to go back to the office to get it. Jill received a set of bolt cutters from the office instead of a set of keys. That would have to do.

Up to Bouverie – 2nd time with Bolt Cutters

The moon had nearly set as Jill returned back up and over the hill to the cave. John (guide) was at the cave entrance; he seemed unhappy to go down the cave so Jill happily bobbed in, since she had all her caving gear on.

In Bouverie Cave

Jill was to pass the bolt cutters to John Wylie and Dave Smith who were at the gate. But where were they? After nearly 20 years, Jill's memory of the cave entrance chamber had faded considerably. She descended the muddy slope and called to them. Then she looked around the rockpile a bit, noting some aragonite-like coralloids on the walls. Presently she got a response and had to work out how to descend the rockpile. Boy, was it tight. John Wylie came back up a few metres for Jill so she could pass the bolt cutters through. She also passed on the bad news that there is no key. John Wylie returned to Dave, leaving Jill to puzzle for about 10 minutes working out how to get herself out of the rockpile. She looked at some of the speleothems, noting the looseness of the sediment and walls. Something crumpled nearby, although that could have been John moving up above. As it was freezing cold outside due to the wind, Jill waited at the base of the climb where she could hear both John up top with the radio, and John W and Dave below who were hammering away at the gate. Then there came the sounds of cheers from below as the gate was eventually removed. Jill heard a discussion about a ladder, then silence for a while. She called up to John that she could see about 10 lycosid spiders on the walls of the chamber. John was looking at a tineid moth fluttering about. Presently Jill heard that a blue pack had been found. John Wylie came up through the rockpile, followed by Dave Smith who was pretty stuffed at this cave. Jill followed them out up the steep slope into the cold night.

Back to Village with Dave Smith, on Trike

Outside the cave, there had been a request on the radio that Jill return to the office. Dave was still trying to manage the situation at the cave (i.e. was fielding lots of questions from guides Lawrie and John, but was clearly very tired so Jill suggested he come back with her to the office. He was given some of the water that was brought up earlier, and Jill gave him some of her chocolate. They climbed back over the hill to the quad bike that had been parked near the marked turnoff on the track, and Dave gave her a ride back on the dog box. Back at the office, Geoff Lang was manning the office. The police had made the decision to get everyone out at that stage and resume in the morning, so all personnel were recalled to the office.

Inside the Guides Office Mike was with Geoff Lang. Mike had requested to the two Police Officers from Crookwell that Goulburn Police Rescue Squad be requested to callout the NSW Cave Rescue Squad. The two officers were on the phone to Goulburn but for some reason they didn't have the appropriate phone numbers. Mike and Geoff looked in an SSS Journal that Geoff had but neither Grace Matts nor Joe Sydneys phone number was listed. Oh well, easily solved – ring John Bonwick and ask him. This was at about 1.30 am. After obtaining the numbers from John Bonwick Mike passed them onto the Crookwell Police Officers.

The situation had now progressed from 'Searching for a likely cave' to 'searching a specific cave'. Jill wondered, given the potential medical situation, whether anyone present who could fit into the cave was qualified to assist

Geoff even if he was found. The whole situation upset John Wylie immensely as he could not fit down into the lower levels, and he could not fathom why the decision to abort at this stage had been made. He left, and drove off home, upset.

Get Some Sleep – 4 am

The rest of us were told to get some rest and sleep in as others would be taking over from now on. Jill and Mike returned to camp and had a wonderful warm shower, getting to bed about 4 am. Megan was wandering about so Jill let her know that Geoff had still not been found but his pack had been found at Bouverie Cave. Jill did not sleep well. Sometime in the wee hours she remembered hearing a noisy lapwing dit-dit-ditting around the place. She arose at about 8:30 as she could not sleep.

Sunday (day)

Mike and Jill had a good breakfast then later walked to the office which had now been set up as the main meeting area. All caving permits were officially cancelled till further notice; the kiosk and all showcaves and walking tracks were also closed. The police were going around telling the campers this, and signs were placed around the tourist area. Some campers left; others chose to stay.

In the office, various services were being mobilised. News helicopters started to buzz around; the playing field became a heliport (another hazard). Various rescue people were arriving: the ambulance, SCAT (special casualty access team), police rescue, volunteer rescue units (South Coast and Berrima), the NSW Cave Rescue Squad. A small initial team was set up comprising Joe Sydney, Peter Brady, Al Warild, Phil Maynard, Alan and Megan Pryke, Peter Bauer and SCAT personnel. They were placed in a police 4WD paddy wagon (!) and transported from the road along the newly created 4WD track to the cave entrance. So the track is no longer indistinct!

Mike and Jill had lunch on the lawn. Jill filled in some trip reports from - was it only yesterday? They went to the office and observed the comings and goings. Should they stay or should they go? By about 4 pm they heard that there was a contingent of cavers coming. They were not rescue trained so should not mill around the operations area. Jill suggested to put the cavers in the Barmah where there was a kitchen and a log fire. Mike suggested to Terry and the Police Officer in charge of the rescue that a road block be set up to prevent people coming down to the office who were not statutory authorities or rescue trained. Cavers coming down would be directed to the Barmah where Mike would register them and form teams of suitable cavers when required. Mike and Terry Matts put together some registration forms (VRA forms for registration and a skills form). Jill and Mike then took the forms and set themselves up in the Barmah. Already cavers were arriving. Mike briefed them, got them registered, then as soon as there were enough to select from, took the forms to the office and copied them. By the time he returned another pile had arrived. Jill copied information, placated people, stoked the fire etc.

Few of these cavers were actually used. Two NUCC cavers were assigned to act as a radio relay and four more were asked to be sent to the cave site but not actually used. The radio relay team were very busy for some hours in cold, damp weather on the surface. They did a marvellous job at a task that was essential for the communications. Various other VRA rescue squad personnel were assigned tasks by VRA leaders. Jill knew a few of these people from some years ago. Some of the Police Rescue guys from Goulburn recognised Mike as their Speleonauts Michiephones were working and still being used in the rescue.

Later that night, the staff ordered food to be delivered: sausages, bread, soft drinks, cake. These were cooked up by part time guide (Grant?). Since most people had not had their dinner, this was greatly appreciated.

Monday morning (early)

A little after midnight, word was out that Geoff had been extracted from the cave and was being sent to hospital. The cave was de-rigged and a lot of equipment was sorted out in the Barmah. Terry Matts from Cave Rescue first addressed the assembled cavers, thanking them for coming out so promptly and at such short notice. He also thought that the cavers might like to look through their photos of Bouverie to compare then and now, since the cave had been modified a bit to get the stretcher out.

The rescue squads were then debriefed by the police, going unit by unit. After that, people were to sign out and leave. Perhaps one or two might have been a bit tired and emotional.

Alan and Megan chose to stay the night and help in the morning. Mike and Jill followed Phil, and were followed by Merv to Mittagong. Here they stopped for a ginger beer. Jill stopped again at Pheasants Nest for some coffee, and finally found a use for the cup holders in the dashboard of the Subaru. They were home and in bed by 4 am.

Monday morning (later)

Hoping for a bit of a sleep-in, Jill got up at 8:30 to ring work. At 9:30, Terry Matts rang to thank them for their help (he was also possibly checking that they had got home in one piece). At 10 am Jill's mother rang. At 10:30 a journo

rang, then another and another. They were fishing for Geoff's surname, which had not been released and any other snippets of information. They were directed to contact the Police or Joe Sydney as NSW CRS media officer. No information was released to them. At 11:00 a telemarketer rang. So Mike and Jill went to work to avoid the phone. Jill had a quiet day. The events had been very tiring and she was not productive until later in the week.

Postscript

We would like to thank the following cavers from NUCC and SUSS. They came down at their own expense and gave their time. Some of them were used in surface operations, more would probably have been used if the rescue went on any longer.

Thanks to Keir Vaughan-Taylor for the rapid mobilisation of these cavers from NUCC and SUSS. It's important to organise assistance early, even though sometimes it may not be called upon, because otherwise the delay in obtaining backup, particularly experienced cavers, can be crucial in determining the outcome of a rescue.

From NUCC thanks to: Arrin Daley, Iain McCulloch, Brendan McCulloch, Ciara O'Hagan, Melanie Stamell Olaf Theden, Nial Tobin,

From SUSS thanks to: Michael Collins, Alison Fenton, Richard Kennedy, Sasa Kennedy, Paul Lewis, Mervyn Maher, Chris Norton, Steven Roy, Greg Ryan, Tina Wilmore

Also thanks to the several dozen other rescuers from groups such as the Police Rescue Squad, Paramedics, Binalong VRA Rescue Squad, Guides from NPWS/DEC/JCRT and NSW Cave Rescue Squad. Particular thanks to all the staff at Wombeyan Caves.

MEASURING THE TRACK

BY JILL ROWLING – WOMBEYAN CAVES, 23RD TO 24TH AUGUST 2008

Participants: Jill Rowling, Mike Lake, Megan Pryke, Alan Pryke, Brenda Carr and Glenn Smith

Friday night: it rained hard at Pheasants Nest, and was snowing at High Range. Megan and Alan had decided to go via Goulburn; Mike and Jill arrived late via the mountain pass road, which had been graded but still had a few large rocks on it.

Saturday 23rd: Bright and sunny, but with a cold southerly wind. The campground birds were in “nuisance” mode, stealing any food they could. One noisy miner flew into Jill’s car and had to be physically picked up as it was trying to escape through a closed window. Mike and Jill went over to the office to talk about the day’s planned activities. The Fig Tree gate was to be left open during the daytime this weekend as the token entry mechanism needs to be repaired.

Alan and Megan spend the day in Grants Cave, trying to work out where the breeze at the end was coming from. They also positioned Twilight Cave and Zephyr Cave with the GPS, as there are possibilities that one of these might connect to Grants. On the surface is a gully, running over the hill towards the south end of Victoria Arch, so there is every possibility that Grants is somehow part of Fig Tree Cave. Grants Cave exploration now requires a “thin team”.

Jill and Mike dropped into the guides office to show them the new lightweight lithium ion batteries from Oldham. Mike’s one has an LED cluster in the headpiece; Jill’s uses the tungsten halogen bulb so she can see mineral colours correctly. The tungsten one draws more current but should run continuously for at least 8 hours on high beam if required. The LED one should be about double that time.

Jill and Mike started surveying the track in Fig Tree Cave. The first few survey legs were done with the Disto, but then the batteries died, partly because of the previous night’s sub-zero temperatures. Jill fished out the trusty steel tape, and all further measurements were done with this. The aim was to position the tops of the stainless steel poles along the track, using the Suuntos, and every so often link them to known survey points. The reason for doing this is to fix the track with respect to the main survey, to stop the Therion software from bending the track the wrong way. This has been holding up the map of the show cave area.

The first stop for most tourists is the view down to Creek Cave Overflow, where they hear the first commentary. Behind them (south) is a rock pile. The flat rock nearest the track has a survey point on it: and aluminium tag placed by SSS. On this rock is a small stalagmite, and surrounding that we saw a lot of white fluffy stuff. Jill climbed over the rock to get the bearing for a survey leg, and noticed a lot of this fluffy stuff on the side of the stalagmite. It’s a mineral extrusion, similar to gypsum, forming little cotton wool shapes, spirals and knotty sheep’s wool shapes complete with crimp. Jill suspects it might be a nitrate such as nitre or sylvite, but was not really prepared to taste it as it could be from wallaby urine or bat guano, deposited prior to the cave becoming a show cave. We should check other caves at this time of the year for similar deposits in dusty areas. The mineral certainly heaves up the substrate.

They exited for lunch when they got to the Opera House, then continued surveying the track which winds around the Opera House rockpile. There will be a lot of Suuntos work required here to link it to the creek below. Some of the detail can be done by viewing from a high level, such as the track to Bat End and the Ceiling Room. At the turnoff to Bat End, Jill climbed up to the old path and retrieved her handline previously left on the drop on the disrupted May trip.

They continued surveying all the way to Bush Rangers Hall, occasionally being passed by tourists. Lawrie came through late in the afternoon, having locked the top gate and checked there was no one else in the cave. When Mike and Jill exited, they checked back at the office.

Mike decided he’d like an early dinner, and set up in the Barmah. Jill got a fire going there, which eventually proved a godsend as the night got very cold. They were joined by Alan and Megan, then later by Glenn Smith and Barbara Carr. There was a rowdy group outside so no point going to bed early. At one stage, one of the noisy ones wobbled over to the Barmah and took all the firewood. About an hour later his wife came back with it all, apologising profusely, as the fellow had managed to drop most of it along the way. When we got back to our campsite, a frost had settled on cars and tents, and anything else left out. All was quiet.

Sunday 24th: The next day was occasionally nice and sunny for a short while, then the sun disappeared behind cloud. The cold southerly was still blowing. Megan and Barbara opted for a walk over to the gorge, since Barbara had not been to Wombeyan before. Alan and Glenn went to Grants Cave to continue searching for those elusive breezes and working out where the rifts were going. Jill and Mike went back to Fig Tree Cave to continue their

survey, from Bush Rangers Hall along the track to just outside of the gate in Victoria Arch, again picking up known survey points where possible. Occasionally they had to stop to let people pass in this narrow part of the cave. Mike and Jill met Megan and Barbara on the way back to camp for lunch, where we devoured some more of Barbara's excellent chocolate brownies. Alan and Glenn arrived shortly after. Trip forms were handed in, then Mike and Jill left by 3 pm as previously arranged.

ADVERT

15th International Congress of Speleology, 2009

By George Veni and Andrew Eavis

The International Congress of Speleology (ICS) is the world's premier speleological event. An event of the International Union of Speleology, it is held once every four years in a location selected by the delegates of the UIS member nations. The next ICS will be held in Kerrville, Texas, USA on 19-26 July 2009. An estimated 2,000 people from nearly 60 countries are expected to attend to share the results of their latest exploration, research, and techniques. Registration will begin by the end of July 2008.

The National Speleological Society (NSS) of the United States will host the ICS in combination with its annual convention for a truly spectacular affair. All of the usual ICS and NSS events will occur in 2009, as well as some new ones. Here is a summary of what to expect:

- Beautiful university venue with camping and air conditioned apartments and dormitories
- Free shuttle bus to nearby hotels
- A full week of activities for registered children ages 7-17
- 1,000 m² of air conditioned indoor space for vendors and exhibitors (outdoor space available too!)
- Papers on the latest discoveries in cave science and exploration (abstracts due 1 December 2008)
- 15 special technical symposia
- Workshops, classes, organizational meetings
- 10 different competitions in cave arts and music
- SpeleOlympic athletic competitions
- Caving day trips: simple, difficult, wet dry, horizontal, vertical – something for everyone
- Family day trips: shopping, tourist sites, hiking, amusement parks
- 12 pre-ICS excursions and field camps
- 9 post-ICS excursions and field camps
- 20 trips on all aspects of speleology as a 'day off from sessions' on Wednesday
- Three delicious banquets
- Evening activities: bat-watching, show cave tours, auction, music, dancing.

Look at the website for complete details: <http://www.ics2009.us> Don't forget to watch the 15-minute video on the website to see Kerrville and more of what the 15th ICS has to offer. If you still have questions, please contact us at: 15th ICS, P.O. Box 691965, San Antonio, Texas 78269 USA, 001-413-383-2276 (fax), secretary@ics2009.us or johnmoses@excite.com.

SMELLS LIKE SPRING

BY JILL ROWLING – WOMBEYAN CAVES, 20TH–21ST SEPTEMBER 2008

Participants: Jill Rowling, Mike Lake, Phil Maynard, Max Midlen, Tom Short, James Selby, Georgina Lloyd, Deborah Johnston, Shannon Crack, Clement Nicolau

Friday Night

The drive in was a lot easier this time as the road had been graded. Mike and Jill arrived first, then Phil and Max. The caver's corner was covered in little white speckles which looked like hail from a distance, but turned out to be *prunus* flower petals. The culprit was a flowering plum near the creek, with a wonderful perfume. Although the weather was fine, it was a bit windy, giving the tent sleepers a hard time. Tom's traytop arrived about 1:30 am. and woke everyone up again.

Saturday 23rd

Bright and sunny, with forecast for hot and windy. Indeed it was windy! Other *prunus* plants in the cavers' corner revealed themselves: single and double flowering pink and white cherry or peach blossom – quite spectacular really against the blue sky (Fig. 1). Deborah's group arrived about 10 am. Mike and Jill went over to the office to talk about the weekend's activities and present them with a 1:200 draft of the Fig Tree Cave survey to date: lots of A4 pages taped together. Our plans were to continue surveying in Fig Tree: the Ballroom area during the day and the Bat chamber at night. Also Jill wanted to look at several caves on the nearby ridge for extrusive minerals similar to that seen in the Fig Tree entrance chamber. The Fig Tree gate was to be left open during the daytime as the token entry mechanism still needs repair. Part of our group would be swimming the gorge (with wetsuits) as the weather looked good. Others would be continued exploration in Grants Cave.



Fig. 1: *Prunus* sp. flowers in Camping Ground, Wombeyan Caves. Photo Jill Rowling.

The Fig Tree Cave surveyors comprised Jill, Mike, Phil and Max. Mike and Jill entered via the top entrance; Phil and Max went in via the Bathroom (which was dryish) and first looked at the sump levels: the first sump (Sump Junction) was dry but the other two were not. The southernmost sump level appeared higher than before.

Mike and Jill had first stopped to photograph the fluffy extrusive minerals in the entrance chamber (Fig. 2), then went to Bat End where they rigged a hand line for the Ballroom at the keyhole. They were joined by Phil and Max, and proceeded to survey the Ballroom using the forestry compass (Fig. 3). Tie-in points were allocated for later Suuntos work on side leads. The large, deep pit in the north end of the Ballroom has a high aven above it trending east. Access would be difficult due to exposure to the pit. We took sightings to some features on the far side of the pit, including a further chamber, but Max was unable to locate that spot from the Ceiling Room (accessible from a somewhat exposed climb in the Opera House). Another mystery for the moment is access to the base of the pit; Jill recalled it was accessible from somewhere near the Drawing Room (parallel to the Colonndades) but that was back in the late 1980's and she may be mistaken. We will investigate that on another trip after some data processing. Graffiti nearby proclaimed that the pit was first descended in the 1860's. One might imagine this was done using traditional methods of lowering a person on a rope, illuminated by candles. A few bats flew past Jill and Mike while Phil and Max were in the Ceiling Room.

The south end of the Ballroom has a couple of small passages coming off it to the south, with some very interesting graffiti from the 1860's in copperplate writing. It must have been a good trip then! The Bat Chamber would be done later that night with Suuntos. The Ballroom includes a high aven, with a passage coming off it trending south. This would be rather difficult to get into; maybe a camera on a balloon might help. A large high passage to the west was illuminated by Max, verifying it is part of the passage with the keyhole: more Suuntos work for later. The party exited via Creek Cave for lunch in (dry) Wombeyan Creek. They returned to check some leads along the show cave exit track above the Marble Way, verifying what needed to be surveyed there, then exited to camp, about 3:30.

Meanwhile the Gorge swimming party had braved the freezing water of the gorge in Mares Forest Creek, and had obtained some interesting photos using an underwater camera. Although it had been a hot, windy day, the wetsuits were most definitely needed.



Fig. 2: Fluffy minerals in entrance chamber of Fig Tree Cave. Photo JR.

The Grants Cave party (Deborah and Shannon) were exploring the north-west area where there are multiple rifts with multiple false floors; they mentioned that it would be not good if adventure tourists got into that section. Fortunately it is somewhat protected by a ladder pitch (although that too can be bypassed). This area is not part of the adventure tour anyway, but participants may be tempted come back and show their friends. It would be better to tell them how to contact a caving club!

After dinner, Phil, Tom and Max returned to Victoria Arch to check a climbable lead in the eastern side of the entrance. The main aim was to determine if it 'went'. They were joined shortly after by Jill, Mike, Georgina and James. Tom had brought his 'sticky' climbing boots for the task, and fortunately the walls were dry. The passage at the top of the climb was pretty much 'what you see is what you get' and Tom was able to help Jill sketch it in on the map. It was not considered worth surveying. As the Bath Room was dry-ish with only a small pool, we went that way into Bush Rangers Hall. Here was another climbing problem: the chamber above the Bath Room. Tom put on his sticky boots again, and with Max's assistance tackled the initial lay back. The problem was there is little purchase on the smooth marble; Tom thought it could have been doable with cams (which we didn't have) but had to admit defeat after a few metres. Well done, though; but it might have to be scaling poles, an extension ladder, or lots of Disto shots from the track.

Phil looked at the Opera House Stage, to see if it needed to be surveyed but what you see it what you get: only a sketch is required. A couple of areas were looked at between the Opera House and the Entrance Chamber; one part can be easily surveyed with Suuntos but a higher passage (The Nave) would require some care to avoid dropping stones on the path.

Mike, Jill and Phil then proceeded to the Bat Chamber to do a Suuntos survey while the bats were out. You can smell the Bat Chamber from the Ballroom, and the aroma in the Bat Chamber itself was impressive. We tried not to stir up the guano, which was dry and soft underfoot. One chamber contains several logs, apparently brought in by people trying to look for leads in the ceiling. The next chamber has a domed ceiling and appears to be the main bat chamber. The one after that curves downwards and more northwards, and contains a very large collapse block and a higher ceiling. Phil scrambled under this block and described the terminal chamber for the survey, calling back some Disto measurements. Mike and Jill declined to scramble through it. Around the floor and walls were numerous spider webs, mainly Stiphideon, and some clothes moth type casings but we did not see moths.

Having finished with the Bat Chamber for now, the group had a brief look along the Drawing Room area for access to the base of the pit, but I think we were too high. Once we plot the surveyed Ballroom we will have a better idea of where to look. Outside the cave, the evening sky was clear with a warm southerly wind, gusting at times. The stars were particularly bright, and you could easily see the 'emu' in the Milky Way, and both the Greater and Lesser Magellanic Clouds, as well as a few planets.

Back at camp, Tom had a nice fire going. When the wind blew from the south, we smelled something bad like a dead animal. Certain people talked until the birds woke up the next day.



Fig. 3: Phil Maynard & Mike Lake surveying in the Ball Room, Fig Tree Cave. Photo JR.

Sunday 21st September – Vernal Equinox

The days started off warm and windy. Mike and Phil went for a long walk around the area of Glass Cave, abandoned quarries ML2, ML4, and Mares Forest Creek. Most of the others went to see a showcave as they had not seen them before; they were very impressed with the beauty and colours of the Wollondilly Cave.

Jill wanted to look at the caves on the nearby ridge to see if there was any fluffy mineral deposits like there are the entrance chamber of Fig Tree Cave. At Wineglass Cave, there was a lot of rubbish including shoes, noodles and plastic wrappers but no fluffy minerals. A beautiful Old Lady (*Tineid*) moth fluttered on a wall. Jill continued roughly southwards, parallel to the camping ground, passing a small cave entrance (W71 I think) and Bone Cave (an unroofed cave) which has a bee's nest in the south wall. She then continued to Blackberry Hole and climbed down to Gundungurra Cave (W8). Just looking around the entrance chamber, there were no fluffy minerals but the ground was dry and dusty. A couple of swallows flitted about the entrance, chattering. Crossing the base of the doline, she went into Dutchmans Cave (W384). At the cave entrance are whorls of green moss plants. This cave is completely different, being a steep 'driveway' of damp soil and rocks, leading to a chamber with a dusty floor. Above the climb down to the lower level (not visited on this trip) were reflective silvery water droplets. This is usually a sign of *actinomyces* activity. Ahead (northwards) is a rockpile, and above this are tree roots. Cave coral is a feature of this area, and forms stripes, elongated toward the dim light of the entrance. Again, no fluffy minerals were seen.

The next cave southwards is Guineacor, an ex-showcave. The area is a little overgrown, with a hawthorn bush in the entrance. I can't imagine the tourists of today negotiating the crawly entrance area and steep ladder. Next to this 8m pitch is a flowstone deposit, rather thickly covered in bat guano. At the base of the ladder is a plastic box containing the visitors book. Jill replaced the booklet and added a pencil, since the blue pen was useless. The paper is 'rite-in-the-rain'. She had a look around the entrance area then, following the track marking, looked at the cave. The large stalactite in the middle of the chamber appears to have ribbon helictites on it. The walls have interesting circular shapes: the horizontal channel looks as though this area may have once taken a bit of water. Circular pits (now calcified over) appear to have been formed by bat guano corrosion. Several stalagmites and flowstone deposits have similar corrosion, indicating at some stage the cave had supported a larger population of bats than at present. A couple of bats were seen, roosting singly, and there was a bit of bat activity in the back of the cave. At the end of the track marking, there are some interesting heligmites at the base of a corroded and regrown flowstone/stalagmite deposit. No fluffy minerals were seen in the cave.

Jill exited the cave and walked down the 'Geoff MacDonnell highway' to Cow Pit (W52). After a late lunch, she climbed down to see if there were any fluffy minerals there: there were none, but there were a lot of *Stiphedeon* spiders in it. Some of their webs were green. In the dark zone there are a lot of 'cave turnips' (calcite coated hemispheres), some broken open to show an acicular mineral inside. Jill thinks they break themselves open due to expansion with water content. There are several green stalactites in here, occasionally dripping. Near the entrance climb was a Blackthorn *Bursaria spinosa* plant covered in tiny, yellow, sweetly-perfumed bell-shaped flowers. Despite its thorns, this plant is usually used as a hand-line to avoid disturbing the steep slope.

Jill exited the cave, re-joined the track which led to the tourist track, and was back at the camping ground by about 3:30. Trip reports were handed in to the Guides office on the way out.

PHOTO GALLERY

A few current and past SUSS members at the SUSS 60th Anniversary, Jenolan Caves, May 2008



Keir and Kelly Vaughan-Taylor outside Bottomles Pit, Southern Limestone Trip, SUSS 60th
Photo Mike Lake



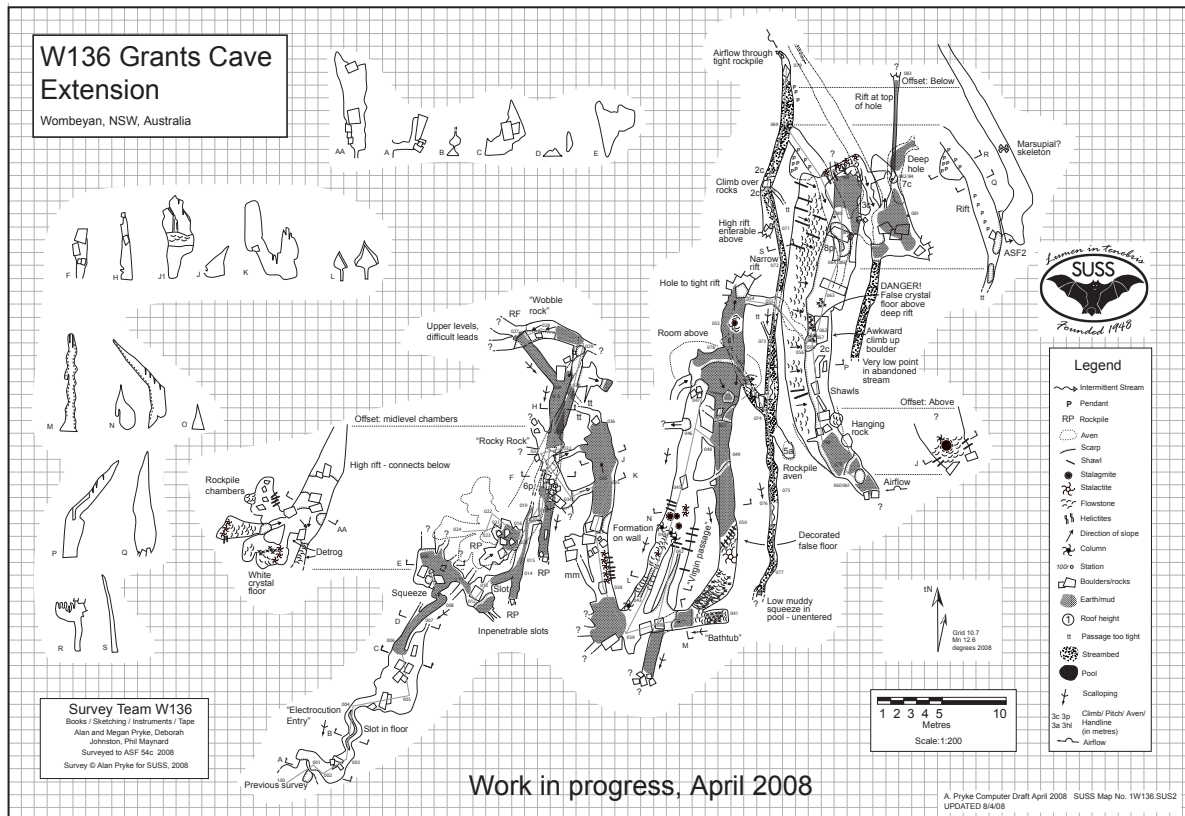
Henry Shannon pointing out a good dig! SUSS 60th
Photo Mike Lake



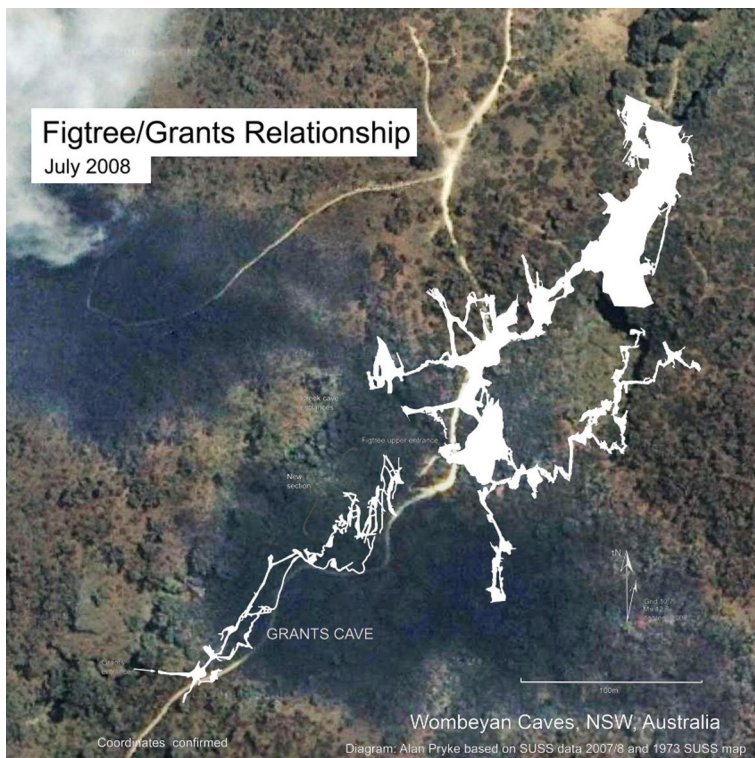
Judy Clarke and Grant Elliot outside the Wallaby Hall, SUSS 60th, Photo Mike Lake



Ev and Geoff Innes, SUSS 60th
Photo Mike Lake



Recent extensions found in Grants Cave (W136). Map Alan Pryke



Overlay of Grants Cave (W136) with Fig Tree Cave (W148/150). Photos Alan Pryke & Google Maps

SUSS COMMITTEE REMINDER TO MEMBERS – RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRIP ATTENDEES

The SUSS Committee ensures that the Trip Coordinators are aware of their responsibilities to SUSS members and the land owner or management authority of an area. However given the recent incident the SUSS Committee would like to make clear that all persons attending a SUSS trip are aware of the following conditions.

Absolute Rules

Caving only within the Permit Period: SUSS trips to many areas are under a permit system. The permit is usually a weekend permit, covering Saturday and Sunday. That means that there is no caving on the Friday if you arrive earlier nor after the end of the permit.

Caving only in the Caves on the Permit: In most permit areas SUSS only has permission to visit the specific caves listed on the permit. If you are unsure about what caves can be visited ask the Trip Coordinator. You can't just enter a cave. You must ask the Trip Coordinator.

Caving only when SUSS Trip Coordinator is Present: Caving cannot start even on the permit days until a SUSS Trip Coordinator has arrived. In some permit areas the Trip Coordinator must check-in at the Guides Office and inform them of the participants and what they are planning to do for the weekend.

Guidelines

Leave details of where you are going: Whether you are going into a cave or exploring on the surface tell the Trip Coordinator where you are going and when you expect to return. Jenolan has a white board outside the cottage where this can be recorded. In either case you must inform the Trip Coordinator. They are required to know where all participants are at all times.

Try to Avoid Lone Activities: If you are alone and have an accident you will have to wait longer for help. There are some situations where caving alone, or surface work alone, is acceptable. The Trip Coordinator needs to know exactly where you are to visit and a time that you are expected back. This is usually only done when the likelihood of a serious accident is low and a task is required that would not justify a team.

Notice particularly the absolute rules. The other points are guidelines. Disregarding all the points above is foolish, we will have little sympathy for you, and you may find yourself in deep guano.

Read the Australian Speleological Federation's Standards:

ASF Cave Safety Guidelines http://www.caves.org.au/s_cave_safety.htm

ASF Code of Ethics http://www.caves.org.au/s_code_of_ethics.htm

TRIP LIST 2008 – 2009

SUSS General Meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at 7:00pm (for a 7.30pm start) in the Common Room in the Holme Building at the University of Sydney.

For updates to this list, check out the SUSS Website: <http://ee.usyd.edu.au/suss>. Detailed information on each caving area (plus other useful information such as what you will need to bring) can be found in the *Beginner's Handbook* section of the Website.

Please Note: it is YOUR responsibility to inform the trip supervisor of any relevant medical conditions which may in any way affect your fitness, such as asthma, diabetes and the like.

November

6 Club meeting 7:30pm Holme Building: Common Room. Video Presentation by Max Midlen.

8-9 Jenolan Get in early before the Horde turns up for the Xmas trip. Contact Shannon Crack 0416 186 326 or shannon.crack@ato.gov.au

19 Social Climbing Climbers are free to just turn up on the night, otherwise contact Deborah deborah@emotiv.com or 0424 042 585 for more details or to ensure a belay.

22 First Aid Course Surry Hills 8:30 to 4:30pm. One Day Full course. Contact Shannon Crack 0416 186 326 or shannon.crack@ato.gov.au

22-23 Wombeyan A place of beautiful scenery, fun caving and great camping. Contact Jill Rowling 9697 4484 (work) or rowling@ali.com.au.

29-30 Beginners Introductory Canyoning Trip Wollemi National Park, the canyons selected for this exciting weekend are perfect for beginners and winter conditions. No experience is required, however you must have a reasonable level of physical fitness to attend. Contact Deborah for more details and to sign up deborah@emotiv.com or 0424 042 585.

December

3 Social Climbing Climbers are free to just turn up on the night, otherwise contact Deborah deborah@emotiv.com or 0424 042 585 for more details or to ensure a belay.

4 Club meeting 7:30pm Holme Building: Common Room. Expected Constitutional Amendment Meeting to be put forth.

6 Jenolan, Annual Christmas BBQ Come along and enjoy. Contact Phil Maynard on 9908 2272 (home) or Philip.Maynard@uts.edu.au if you coming to the BBQ..

6-14 Jenolan Christmas trip. A whole week at Jenolan with lot of caves to explore. Contact Phil Maynard 9908 2272 (home) or Philip.Maynard@uts.edu.au.

17 Social Climbing Climbers are free to just turn up on the night, otherwise contact Deborah deborah@emotiv.com or 0424 042 585 for more details.

January, 2009

5-9 January 2009, Karstaway Konference 2009 27th Biennnial Conference of the Australian Speleological Federation, Sale, Victoria. <http://www.caves.org.au/conf2009/>

10-11 Jenolan Permit pending? Trip leader to be arranged.

12-19 Mole Creek Tasmania Kublai Khan and Croessus Cave, definitely two of Tasmaina's best caves, also Lynds, Marakoopa, My Cave, Westmoreland Creek Cave and Mersey Hill cave (Permit Pending) Contact Phil Maynard Philip.Maynard@uts.edu.au or 9908 2272 (home).

Jenolan trips 2009, permit pending: 7-8 March, 4-5 April, 16-17 May, 13-14 June, 4-12 July, 15-16 August, 12-13 Sept, 10-11 October, 14-15 November, 5-13 December.
